

FREDERICK COUNTY HEALTH CARE COALITION-AVAILABILITY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

February 27, 2008

ATTENDEES: Dr. Joe Berman, Monica Grant, Amy Gunnarson, Leigh Joos, Renee' Kyttle, Eileen McGrath, Dr. Marilea Miller, Helen Monk, Jeffrie Normoyle

GUEST SPEAKERS: Jay Powell and Dawn Smith, United HealthCare (UHC) Health Choice Program

UHC Presentation: General program information was shared with the committee; concerns re: inadequate area provider participation, possible reasons and remedies for what seems to be an ongoing problem were discussed. UHC reps indicated that although participation appears low, "access standards" (applied by DHMH to assure area availability of providers) are being met in Frederick County. Some key points included in the discussion:

Possible reasons for providers' decisions not to participate:

- ~Reimbursement rates – perceived to be lower than commercial insurance plans; actually higher in some cases; vary with code/procedure-some better than others
- ~Associated follow-up costs, "no-shows", higher rates of patient non-compliance
- ~Provider's fear of being the only one in the area to accept plan(s); unfair burden on practice
- ~Difficulty with the coordination of benefits (MCO and private insurance overlap)
- ~Paperwork/increased office administration costs for patients

Possible remedies for above:

- ~Improve awareness of actual reimbursements; may compare favorably to private insurers
- ~Increase reimbursements to providers; state sets base/floor rates but could be increased by MCOs
- ~Expand/improve MCO case management services to lessen practice burden, decrease pt. no-shows, improve compliance with follow-up/treatment regimens
- ~ If concerned with being overwhelmed, encourage providers to accept limited MCO participants; set number/month
- ~Improve process for coordination of benefits
- ~Educate providers about new options which make claims submission easy (online portal system;direct billing)
- ~Increase provider recruitment efforts; offer incentives (UHC is working on a pilot incentive program for providers)

The idea of convening a meeting to bring together all area MCOs, area physicians, hospital leaders, and community/coalition members was suggested and well received by those present; UHC reps indicated they would be willing to sponsor such an event; they expressed their commitment to work toward improving provider participation and would like to partner with the coalition and community

The committee acknowledged that planning such an event would require a commitment on the part of the coalition; Leigh will share the suggestion with the Exec.Committee for further discussion.

Executive Committee Update –Briefly provided by Leigh

Old Business:

Goals/Objectives:

Once more, the meeting time concluded before discussion of the suggestions sent via email to committee members; since there was general agreement on priorities, Leigh will draft the revised objectives and re-circulate them for comments.

New Business:

A number of members expressed the desire for the large coalition to meet to discuss developing overall goals in light of accomplishments to date, including the needs assessment, prescription program, and partnership with the FCHD to develop the Health Care Access Program. Revised priorities and current membership may prompt a realignment/reassignment of committees.

Next Meeting March 26, 2008, 4-5:30 in the FMH Classroom Area